



Communist University Introductions

The texts that follow in this booklet may be used as “openings to discussion” in relation to the original reading texts that are supplied by the CU. They are not intended to be authoritative, still less conclusive. They are contributions to discussion like any other such contributions.

These texts are also used in the e-mail distribution of the original reading texts, in the hope that they may assist people to start reading the main, original texts. The introductions are not a substitute for the reading texts.

This is one of two booklets containing introductions to the CU “Basics” course.

Basics, Part 0

Introduction to “Basics”

The Communist University will now be serialising the ten-week “[Basics](#)” course. This course was designed to satisfy comrades who are impatient to acquire the political fundamentals as quickly as possible.

At the same time, it is designed to open doors to further studies, including, but not limited to, the other 15 courses of the Communist University (find them [here](#)).

After this one, each post will have, attached, at least one PDF file of an original text, formatted for printing as a booklet. The post will consist of an opening to a discussion of the attached text.

Please join in the dialogue around these posts by e-mail. Serialising the courses in parts is what allows the possibility of such e-mail dialogue around a common topic.

By contributing to dialogue, you will multiply the value of this course for yourself, and for others.

Education

The course begins with reflections on the theory of teaching and learning. This is so that we can know what we are doing, how we will do it, and why. In general, the theory that underlies the pedagogical approach of the Communist University is that of Paulo Freire, author of “The Pedagogy of the Oppressed”. Not only is it crucial to ourselves as we proceed, but it is also given as a political method, and as the actual substance of political practice. Education is politics, and politics is education. Education takes place in dialogue.

The rest of the course

The second part leads with Machiavelli, backed up with texts on Capital and The State by Marx and Engels respectively. The third part is the Communist Manifesto of 1848, followed by summarising works by Lenin and Engels in the fourth part. By this stage we should have made out a good general outline of the material history of the world, and of its constant class struggles.

In the fifth part we come back to South Africa to look at the SACP’s short constitution, and to other crucial South African documents: the 1955 Freedom Charter and the 1969 Morogoro “Strategy and Tactics” document of the ANC.

In the sixth and seventh parts we deal with the relation of the vanguard party to the mass organisations of the working class, in particular trade unions and their work of collective bargaining with capitalist employers. Then we go straight to Karl Marx’s classic lecture on this topic, “Value, Price and Profit”, backed up by the great Chapter One of Marx’s Capital, Volume 1, on Commodities.

In part nine we return to a closer examination of the state, starting with Lenin’s lecture on the state, and then using two great classics, Engels’ “Origin of the Family, Private Property and The State”, and Lenin’s “The State and Revolution”.

The tenth part is dedicated to the on-going struggle against Imperialism, using several short texts and then concluding with Joe Slovo’s great “The South African Working Class and the National Democratic Revolution”.



[Paulo Freire, 1921-1997](#)

Pedagogy According to Paulo Freire

For the purpose of this set of texts called [Basics](#), designed for study circles without a lecturer, it helps to have an overt theory of “pedagogy” – a simple theory of learning and teaching – as a starting point.

The great 20th-century theoretician of liberation pedagogy was the Brazilian [Paulo Freire](#). It was Freire who gave us the word “conscientise”. It was Paulo Freire, more than any other, who showed how the bourgeois education system, with its “banking” theory of pedagogy (see today’s text, attached and/or downloadable via the link at the bottom of this document), is not well designed to educate, in the fullest sense, but rather tends to reproduce the class relations that suit the bourgeoisie.

Education, which should by nature liberate the student, is made by the ruling class into a means of repression, said Freire.

How can we make sure that education is part of the building of socialism and communism? To ask such a question is to “problematise” education. To ask such a question is to begin a “dialogue” about education.

Freire thought that the political education of the oppressed, if it was not to be patronising and therefore counter-productive (because then it would reproduce and reinforce the oppressive bourgeois state), would have to be done by a new and different method.

In the dialogical method that Paulo Freire devised, and named the [Pedagogy of the Oppressed](#), or otherwise [Critical Pedagogy](#), there is no elementary, junior, senior, matriculation, undergraduate, post-graduate, doctorate or professor level. Teachers are learners and learners are teachers; yet all are free-willing “subjects”, having “agency”, capable of leadership.

As much as there may be a room and a gathering of individuals, each known by name, and a “codification” which is the text or other object to make the occasion, yet the dialogue admits no limits. The Freirean gathering is not sheltered.

It is one of the essentials of Freirean Pedagogy that we refuse the fiction of the sheltered classroom, and instead recognise that the oppressor is all around us and even within us, while we strive to liberate ourselves through our mutual, pedagogical dialogue.

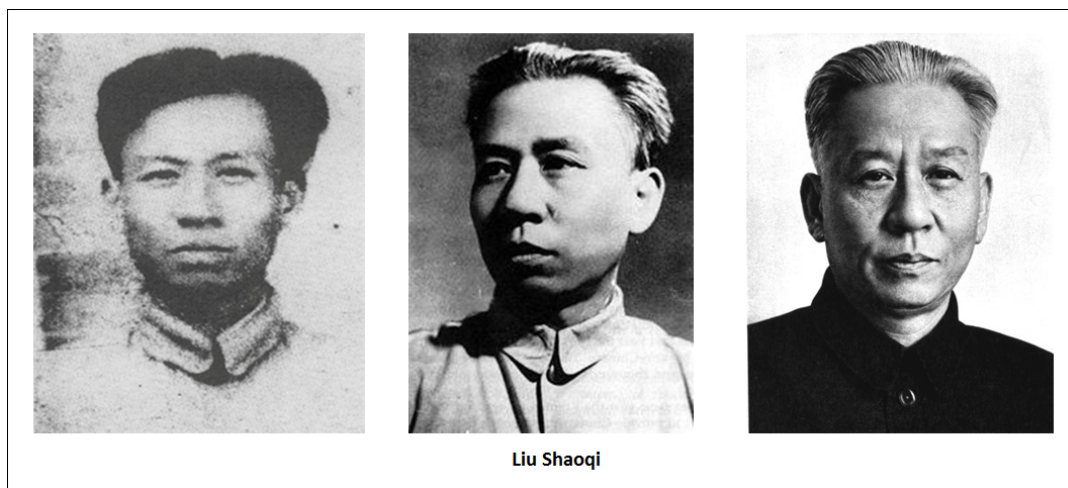
In Freirean practice, where no distinction is made between basic and advanced, all that we can do is to conduct a process of “problematizing”, beginning with education itself.

So, as a rule in all our (CU) courses, we use readings from original authors, and not derivative or secondary texts. In that spirit, the first of these chosen building blocks is the second chapter of Freire’s “Pedagogy of the Oppressed” (**attached**), here supplemented with a glossary of “critical pedagogy” terms. This text provides an opportunity to reflect upon what we are trying to do by learning and teaching.

You may ask: What is political education for?

For the late Freire, and for the Freireans of today, all education is a political act and a social act; an act of liberation and of self-liberation.

- **The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Pedagogy of the Oppressed, C2, plus Glossary and Political Education](#).**
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[Liu Shaoqi, 1898-1969](#)

How to be a Good Communist

In today's document (**attached**) Liu-Shaoqui discusses how members of a Communist Party should *"cultivate and temper themselves"* and *"why communists must undertake self cultivation."*

Liu says *"...the proletariat must conscientiously go through long periods of social revolutionary struggles and in such struggles change society and change itself."*

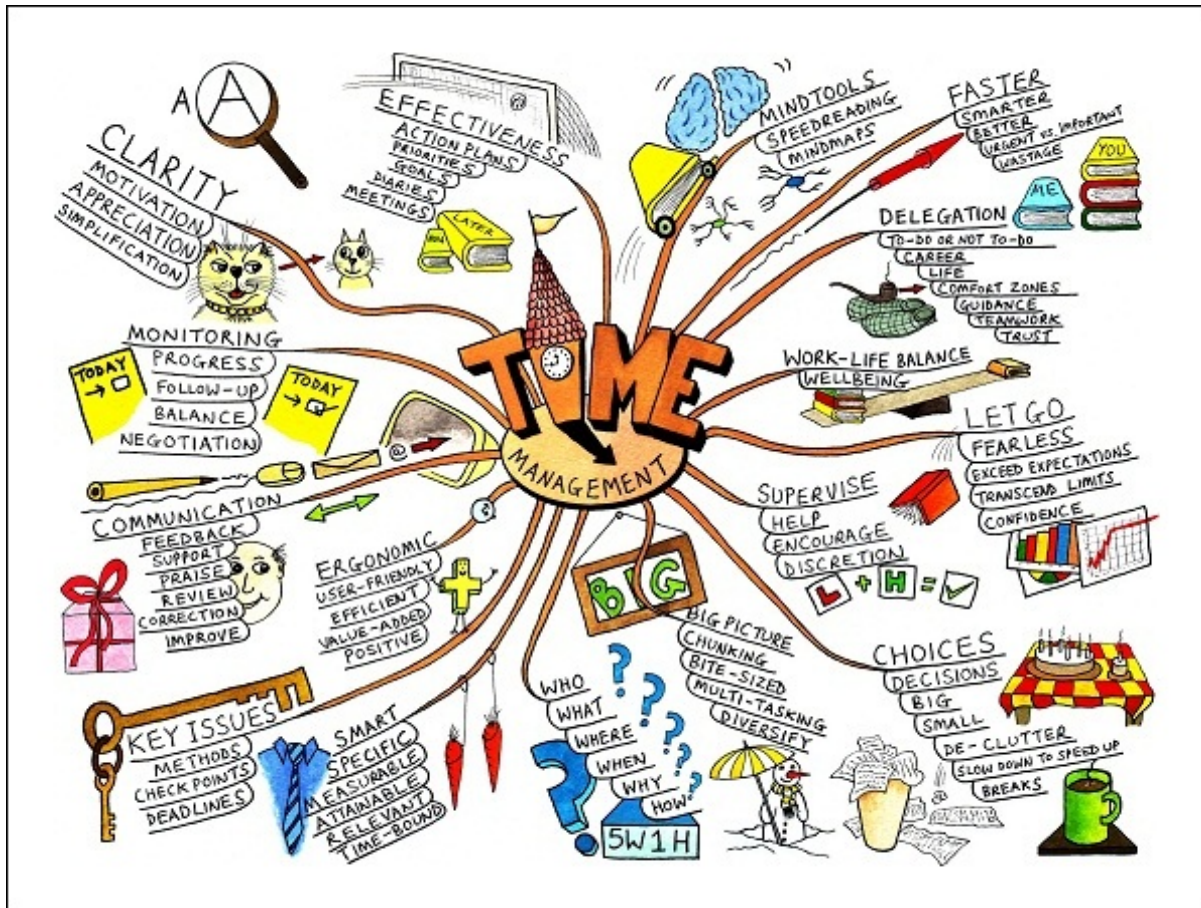
The linked document is the first chapter. The remainder of the book can be found on the [Marxists Internet Archive](#).

This text is quite in demand, possibly because of its title, and because of the simple didactic certainties that it offers. Let it speak for itself.

But we should in any case note that Liu Shaoqi's political career ended abruptly with his arrest in 1969 during the "cultural revolution". He was expelled from the Party in 1968, accused of being a "capitalist-roader". His death followed in 1969.

So in life, being a good communist, or being recognised as such, turned out to be problematic for Liu Shaoqui. Click the link below the graphic, above, to read more about Liu Shaoqui.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Liu Shaoqi, How to be a good Communist, 1939](#).



Use Your Head

The third item in the first part of the ten-week Communist University “Basics” course is your VC’s own “conspectus” (overview or synopsis) of Tony Buzan’s book, “Use Your Head” (attached; download linked below).

The author Buzan does not propose, or proceed from, any overt political premises in this book. If anything he appears at first sight to resemble a utilitarian bourgeois “management guru” or “motivational speaker”. What makes his work stand out from the others of that kind is its great practical effectiveness, and not any obvious political aspect.

It is also clear why this text fits in to our course so well: It is dialectical. And it is intentional (see below). Therefore it is Freirean, whether consciously or unconsciously so.

From a practical point of view, Buzan’s appeal is that he offers assistance with faster, more purposeful reading; with memorising; and with note-taking, particularly using his invention, the “mind-map” technique, of which an example is given above. These

techniques are just what students need to help them get through their studies, and just what conventional education often failed to give them.

Students used to be obliged to try to learn before having learned *how* to learn. Buzan filled this gap very well.

What underlies Buzan's approach? It is not that he was lucky to stumble upon three techniques, like a prospector discovering diamonds. No. What distinguishes the mind-map, in particular, from other forms of note-taking characterised by lists and bullet-points, is that it begins and ends as a "unity and struggle of opposites". It is a representation, in one glance, of the way in which any phenomenon is the product, or resultant, of many abstract dynamic forces, or vectors, pulling in different directions.

The mind-map is a very good illustration of exactly what is meant by "dialectics".

The other main characteristic of Buzan's approach is its "intentionality", to borrow a term from Paulo Freire's vocabulary. Towards the end of Chapter 1 of Freire's "The Pedagogy of the Oppressed", (download linked below) Freire quotes Alvaro Vieira Pinto saying that intentionality is "*the fundamental property of consciousness*", remarking that this concept is "*of great importance for the understanding of a problem-posing pedagogy*".

Buzan's approach is full of intentionality. There is no question, for Buzan, of wandering about, learning for learning's sake, in a random, eclectic way. Buzan says that you must be looking for **a result**.

Karl Marx, in the 11th Thesis on Feuerbach, said that while the philosophers have interpreted it, the point is to change the world.

Thus intentionality, as well as dialectics and dialogue, are common and basic themes in Freire, Buzan and Marx.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Preparing to Write, Conspectus of Tony Buzan's 'Use Your Head', 1974, by D Tweedie](#).
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[Paulo Freire, 1921-1997](#)

Pedagogy is the Revolutionary Instrument

“While the problem of humanization has always, from an axiological [Axiology: The philosophical study of value] point of view, been humankind's central problem, it now takes on the character of an inescapable concern. Concern for humanization leads at once to the recognition of dehumanization, not only as an ontological possibility, but as an historical reality. And as an individual perceives the extent of dehumanization, he or she may ask if humanization is a viable possibility. Within history in concrete, objective contexts, both humanization and dehumanization are possibilities for a person as an uncompleted being conscious of their incompleteness.

“But while both humanization and dehumanization are real alternatives, only the first is the people's vocation. This vocation is constantly negated, yet it is affirmed by that very negation. It is thwarted by injustice, exploitation, oppression, and the violence of the oppressors; it is affirmed by the yearning of the oppressed for freedom and justice, and by their struggle to recover their lost humanity.”

Thus begins Chapter 1 of Paul Freire's masterpiece, “The Pedagogy of the Oppressed” (attached).

This “Basics” course does explicitly not introduce any so-called “tools of analysis”, or “dialectical materialism”. These things are not specifically dealt with until the CU course on [Philosophy and Religion](#). But it is not the case that there is no philosophy

in the “Basics” course. It starts right here at the beginning, with Paulo Freire, and it is very profound and very advanced.

Although he never professes to be exclusively a Marxist, Paulo Freire is from the start of this book advocating the recovery of lost humanity, which is the fundamental intention of Karl Marx’s master-work, “Capital”.

Marx, by the way, was not a “dialectical materialist”, or at least, not in the commonplace or vulgarised meaning of that term. Marx’s understanding of the dialectical relationship between the human subject and the objective material world corresponded exactly to the following two paragraphs by Freire, from page 6 of the attached booklet:

*“... **one cannot conceive of objectivity without subjectivity.** Neither can exist without the other, nor can they be dichotomized. The separation of objectivity from subjectivity, the denial of the latter when analyzing reality or acting upon it, is objectivism. On the other hand, the denial of objectivity in analysis or action, resulting in a subjectivism which leads to solipsistic positions, denies action itself by denying objective reality. Neither objectivism nor subjectivism, nor yet psychologism is propounded here, but rather subjectivity and objectivity in constant dialectical relationship.*

“To deny the importance of subjectivity in the process of transforming the world and history is naive and simplistic. It is to admit the impossible: a world without people. This objectivistic position is as ingenuous as that of subjectivism, which postulates people without a world. World and human beings do not exist apart from each other, they exist in constant interaction. Man does not espouse such a dichotomy; nor does any other critical, realistic thinker. What Marx criticized and scientifically destroyed was not subjectivity, but subjectivism and psychologism. Just as objective social reality exists not by chance, but as the product of human action, so it is not transformed by chance. If humankind produce social reality (which in the “inversion of the praxis” turns back upon them and conditions them), then transforming that reality is an historical task, a task for humanity.”

These paragraphs assert that there is **no priority of the objective or material world over the subjective human consciousness**. Freire is highly preoccupied with the subject-object relationship, and insists “that the concrete situation which begets oppression must be transformed” (p.5). But the people’s vocation is humanisation, says Freire. Transforming social reality is an historical task – a task for humanity as the subjective, creative agent of its own history.

This is the first item of business that we have before us as human beings, and our “only effective instrument is a humanizing pedagogy.”

The latter phrase comes from the final paragraphs of Chapter 1 of “The Pedagogy of the Oppressed”, which are here given in full:

“The struggle begins with men's recognition that they have been destroyed. Propaganda, management, manipulation - all arms of domination - cannot be the instruments of their rehumanization. The only effective instrument is a humanizing pedagogy in which the revolutionary leadership establishes a permanent relationship of dialogue with the oppressed. In a humanizing pedagogy the method ceases to be an instrument by which the teachers (in this instance, the revolutionary leadership) can manipulate the students (in this instance, the oppressed), because it expresses the consciousness of the students themselves.”

‘The method is, in fact, the external form of consciousness manifest in acts, which takes on the fundamental property of consciousness - its intentionality. The essence of consciousness is being with the world, and this behavior is permanent and unavoidable. Accordingly consciousness is in essence a 'way towards' something apart from itself outside itself, which surrounds it and which it apprehends by means of its ideational capacity. Consciousness is thus by definition a method, in the most general sense of the word. [Alvaro Vieira Pinto, from a work in preparation on the philosophy of science.]’

“A revolutionary leadership must accordingly practice co-intentional education. Teachers and students (leadership and people), co-intent on reality, are both Subjects, not only in the task of unveiling that reality and thereby coming to know it critically, but in the task of re-creating that knowledge. As they attain this knowledge of reality through common reflection and action, they discover themselves as its permanent re-creators. In this way, the presence of the oppressed in the struggle for their liberation will be what it should be: not pseudo-participation, but committed involvement.”

Not only does this explain the basis upon which the entire Communist University project been built. It is also a fully-worked-out manual for day-to-day revolutionary practice. It tells you, directly, what to do.

In the course of Freire’s development of his argument and even in the few paragraphs quoted in this introduction, above, Freire explains a great deal of philosophy, including the subject and the object, and dialectics.

But he does so in a way that is immediately linked to the practical way forward, and this is why Paulo Freire’s writing serves as a sufficient introduction to indispensable topic of philosophy, in our Basics course.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed, 1970, Chapter 1.](#)
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Basics, Part 2



[Lorenzo di Piero De' Medici](#)

The Prince

Like the communists of today, [Niccolò Machiavelli](#) cultivated “long experience in contemporary affairs and a continual study of antiquity”. Both Machiavelli and Marx were familiar with the politics of ancient Greece and Rome, as well as in “contemporary affairs”.

Machiavelli’s “Prince” was written over 500 years ago, in Florence, Italy, and published in 1512. According to Karl Marx, the sixteenth century (1501-1600) was when capitalism first arose on the earth, especially in the Netherlands and in England, but it was Italy that had the most developed political culture at that time.

Hence [“The Prince”](#) appeared much earlier than the first writings on Political Economy such as those by [Thomas Hobbes](#), [William Petty](#) and [Nicholas Barbon](#), which appeared between 1650 and 1700. Karl Marx was familiar with all of

these, and Machiavelli's work in particular has been foundational for politicians and for political thought during the five centuries of its existence.

[Machiavelli](#) was needing employment when he wrote this user-friendly text for the 20-year-old Florentine prince [Lorenzo di Piero De' Medici](#) (pictured above), in the hope that the young man would give Machiavelli a job as a consultant, *consigliero*, or something of that sort. No job resulted for Machiavelli, but what he left us as a result of this attempt was a set of "short texts" of very frank and still-useful political education, not very different in conception from a Communist University "[Generic Course](#)".

The chapter, in the attached selection of four, that corresponds most closely to the politics of today is Chapter IX, "Concerning a Civil Principality". All of them are very interesting and all contain advice that is still good after 500 years. Our discussion should be about this advice. If people have not read the material in advance, one chapter could be selected and read out loud. The chapters are very short, but powerful.

Machiavelli had a good basic understanding of class politics, which is perhaps why his works were put on the Pope's *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* (Index of Forbidden Books) not long after his death – thereby quickly guaranteeing their eternal fame.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Four selected parts from The Prince, by Machiavelli](#).
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Historical Tendency of Capitalist Accumulation

In support of “The Prince” we now go straight to the most famous work of the Communist canon: Karl Marx’s “Capital”, in full strength.

The short Chapter 32 (attached) is the second last chapter in Volume 1 of “Capital”. It is a broad-brush summary of the first volume, which was published in 1867.

This chapter is only about 1000 words long - roughly the same length as a newspaper “feature” article. It is one of several passages in the works of Marx, Engels and Lenin that compress world history into a single sweep, in this case from the time of slaves and serfs, through the stages of the development of capitalism, to the anticipated proletarian revolution.

Other such passages in the “classics” include Chapter 9 of “The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State” by Frederick Engels, which will be posted as the next item, and the first few pages of “The Communist Manifesto”, by Marx and Engels, which is the main text in the next part of this “Basics” course.

The “**Basics**” course is partly an attempt to answer the frequently-expressed desire for a “simple” explanation of the politics of the working class, and of the intellectual partisans of the working class – the communists.

In attempting this task, some texts have been chosen that exemplify the various original authors’ own attempts to respond to, and to satisfy, the manifest popular craving for a brief and easily-absorbed overall explanation of how politics works.

This chapter from Marx, wrapping up his master-work, “Capital, Volume 1”, is one of those.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Capital, V1, C32, Historical Tendency of Capital, Marx](#)
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Basics, Part 2b



[Wampanoag](#)

Origin of Family, Property and State

The previous post introduced [Chapter 32 of Karl Marx's "Capital", Volume 1](#). It is a typically sweeping overview of history, placed at the end of Marx's long book as a summary, and the one before that was from "The Prince", by Machiavelli.

Both Machiavelli and Marx were familiar with the history of "the ancients", and especially with the literature of the Greeks and the Romans. These ancients often wrote in similarly sweeping terms. They were humanists and generalists and not narrow-minded specialists. They were philosophers in the broad sense of the word: people who sought wisdom of all kinds, and the essence of wisdom itself.

With today's item, and once again to support the kind of historical view that Machiavelli brought back into modern historiography, and into literature, we have Chapter 9 of Frederick Engels' ["The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State"](#) (attached; download linked below).

We will return to "The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State" later in this Basics course when we are dealing more specifically with the State, and we will

return to it again when we deal with the CU course called ["No Woman, No Revolution"](#).

This is because the rise of property, and the State that secured property and created class-division, was also the cause of the fall of the women in human society.

Please ignore the first three paragraphs of today's given chapter. These paragraphs only refer back to earlier chapters in the book. From the fourth paragraph onwards what you will find is a short history of human society from its beginning right up to modern times.

In the literature of Marx and Engels, as in the literature of the ancient Greeks and Romans, and as in Machiavelli, there is a constant sense of history on a grand scale, or what is sometimes called a "grand narrative" of human life, which may then be projected into the future.

Engels was a pioneer in the field of prehistory - the study of the time in the development of human culture before the appearance of the written word - as he was in many other fields of learning. His ideas on prehistory, based also on work done by [Henry Morgan](#) and then by Karl Marx, have stood the test of time.

Marx had recently died when Engels wrote this book. It is based to a considerable extent on papers left by Marx. Hence the book is both a posthumous collaboration, and also a tribute to Marx by Engels.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Origin of Family, Private Property and State, C9, Engels](#).
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[Karl Marx, 1818 - 1883](#)

Bourgeois and Proletarians

Bourgeois & Proletarians is the first of the three major parts of the [Communist Manifesto](#), commissioned by the Communist League, written in London by Karl Marx, at the age of 29, with the help of his then 27-year-old friend Frederick Engels, and published in January, 1848.

Also included is the final page of the Manifesto, called “Position of the Communists in Relation to the Various Existing Opposition Parties.”

Marx and Engels were under pressure from the Communist League to get this job done quickly. The brief was as difficult as it could be: to produce a short, emphatic, unambiguous, motivational description of historic processes, and to announce a credible determination to change the world under the leadership of the most exploited class of people, the working class, also known as the proletariat.

Marx and Engels were convinced that the new masters, the capitalists, also known as burghers, or burgesses, or bourgeoisie, that had grown up in the towns under feudal rule, were sooner or later going to be overthrown by the proletariat that the bourgeoisie had brought into existence.

Marx fell behind the agreed deadline, but came through with a magnificent text just a few weeks before the February, 1848 events in Paris that brought the proletariat on to the stage of history to an extent that had not previously been seen in the world.

The timing was great, and the text turned out to be classic to the extent that every line of it is memorable, especially in this first part. It is so rich and so compressed as to be saturated with meaning, and practically impossible to summarise. Therefore let

us simply quote some of the most extraordinary sentences, so as to encourage you to read the document, not once but many times:

The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.

Society as a whole is more and more splitting up into two great hostile camps, into two great classes directly facing each other - bourgeoisie and proletariat.

The executive of the modern state is but a committee for managing the common affairs of the whole bourgeoisie.

All fixed, fast frozen relations, with their train of ancient and venerable prejudices and opinions, are swept away, all new-formed ones become antiquated before they can ossify.

All that is solid melts into air, all that is holy is profaned, and man is at last compelled to face with sober senses his real condition of life and his relations with his kind.

The final words of the Manifesto are as follows:

In short, the Communists everywhere support every revolutionary movement against the existing social and political order of things.

In all these movements, they bring to the front, as the leading question in each, the property question, no matter what its degree of development at the time.

Finally, they labour everywhere for the union and agreement of the democratic parties of all countries.

The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a communist revolution. The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win.

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

Please download and read the text via the following link:

[Communist Manifesto, Bourgeois and Proletarians, Marx and Engels, 1848](#)



[Frederick Engels, 1820-1895](#)

Proletarians and Communists

We only need one text for one discussion per week, but the Communist University always gives alternatives, which can also be used for supplementary reading. Yesterday we took the first part of the [Communist Manifesto](#). Here is the second part, called [Proletarians and Communists](#).

As with the first part of this highly-concentrated piece of writing, the simplest way to present it is with selected quotes. Here are some:

The Communists do not form a separate party opposed to the other working-class parties.

They have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole.

They do not set up any sectarian principles of their own, by which to shape and mold the proletarian movement.

The Communists are distinguished from the other working-class parties by this only:

(1) In the national struggles of the proletarians of the different countries, they point out and bring to the front the common interests of the entire proletariat, independently of all nationality.

(2) In the various stages of development which the struggle of the working class against the bourgeoisie has to pass through, they always and everywhere represent the interests of the movement as a whole.

The text then deals with property, and with marriage, in similar terms to “[The Origin of the Family, Private Property and The State](#)”, which was written 35 years later. One of the remarkable things about the “Manifesto” is that it summarises ideas which had not yet been published and knocked into shape by controversy, yet it did so very accurately, and the Manifesto still stands tall today. On ideas, and on the struggle of ideas, it says, among other things:

The ruling ideas of each age have ever been the ideas of its ruling class.

When people speak of the ideas that revolutionize society, they do but express that fact that within the old society the elements of a new one have been created, and that the dissolution of the old ideas keeps even pace with the dissolution of the old conditions of existence.

The history of all past society has consisted in the development of class antagonisms, antagonisms that assumed different forms at different epochs.

But whatever form they may have taken, one fact is common to all past ages, viz., the exploitation of one part of society by the other. No wonder, then, that the social consciousness of past ages, despite all the multiplicity and variety it displays, moves within certain common forms, or general ideas, which cannot completely vanish except with the total disappearance of class antagonisms.

The communist revolution is the most radical rupture with traditional relations; no wonder that its development involved the most radical rupture with traditional ideas.

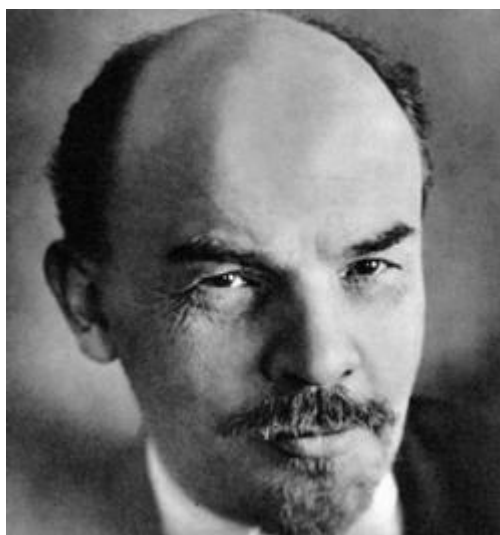
Finally, the Manifesto arrives, at the end of the second part, at the following tremendous vision of communism as the purest possible kind of human freedom:

Political power, properly so called, is merely the organized power of one class for oppressing another. If the proletariat... by means of a revolution, makes itself the ruling class, and, as such, sweeps away by force the old

conditions of production, then it will, along with these conditions, have swept away the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms and of classes generally, and will thereby have abolished its own supremacy as a class.

In place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association in which the free development of each is the condition for the free development of all.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Communist Manifesto, Proletarians and Communists, Marx and Engels.](#)
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Sources and Component Parts of Marxism

We have said, while discussing Machiavelli, that communism does not discard the past, but grows out of it. This week the main item is Lenin's "[Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism](#)" (download linked below). This piece of writing, though extremely short, manages to embrace the whole of philosophy, politics and economics. For these reasons it is highly popular with teachers and students.

Lenin's purpose is to show how comprehensive Marxism is, and that Marxism is on the "highroad of development of world civilisation".

He puts the matter like this:

"...there is nothing resembling "sectarianism" in Marxism, in the sense of its being a hidebound, petrified doctrine, a doctrine which arose away from the highroad of development of world civilisation. On the contrary, the genius of Marx consists precisely in the fact that he furnished answers to questions which had already engrossed the foremost minds of humanity. His teachings arose as a direct and immediate continuation of the teachings of the greatest representatives of philosophy, political economy and socialism."

One may appreciate Lenin's point, without necessarily accepting every simplicity in this highly compressed account. It is a scheme of understanding, almost like a diagram. It raises many questions, for example:

- Is there any such thing as "Marxism", in the sense described here by Lenin as "complete and harmonious" and "an integral world conception"? Karl Marx did

not think so. From his own point of view, Marx had only completed a small part of what lay before him; and he refused the label “Marxist”.

- In what sense was Marx’s philosophy materialist? Did Marx see human beings first and foremost as arrangements of molecules – i.e. as an “extension” of material? Or is the actual point of Marx’s philosophy and politics to give the free human subject priority over the material, objective world in which it must toil for its development? Scholars still debate these questions.
- In what sense did Marx have an economic doctrine, or an economic theory? It is true that the question of surplus value is at the core of Marx’s Capital, Volume 1. But is that work therefore an economic text-book? Or is it really what Marx called it: A Critique of Political Economy? In other words, is it not anti-economics, rather than economics?

When it comes to politics, there is no doubt about *“the struggle of classes as the basis and the motive force of the whole development”*, as Lenin puts it. So there is a lot that is good in the “Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism”. But it is only a start and it does not absolve anyone from the necessity of further study.

It is pleasing that in this short, packed piece Lenin still has time to mention South Africa (in his last paragraph), and that news of proletarian organisation in our country had already reached Lenin over a century ago, in 1913.

- **The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [3 Sources and 3 Component parts of Marxism, Lenin, 1913](#).**
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[Frederick Engels, 1820 - 1895](#)

Socialism, Utopian and Scientific

The attached text (also downloadable via link below) is "[Socialism, Utopian and Scientific](#)", by Frederick Engels.

By Utopian, Engels meant imaginary, or ideal, and typical of the early socialists such as [Robert Owen](#), [Henri de Saint-Simon](#), and [François Fourier](#) (who was the historical inventor of the word "feminism", among other things). Marx and Engels respected these pioneers but also distinguished themselves critically from them. The third part of [the third section of the Communist Manifesto](#) of 1848 is devoted to them.

In the previous post we had Lenin's "The Three Sources and Three Component Parts of Marxism". "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific" has a similar three-part structure, and there is another work of Lenin's (written as an entry for an encyclopedia) called "[Karl Marx, A Brief Biographical Sketch with an Exposition of Marxism](#)", of a length that is intermediate between the two we have given, with a similar structure. That one might be the more "basic" text, but Engels' work is the real classic.

Frederick Engels begins "Socialism, Utopian and Scientific" (see the link below), with the [Great French Revolution](#) that started in 1789. From this point on we can meet, in their developed form, the class protagonists who allied and clashed from that time onwards until now, in all possible permutations: alliances holy and unholy, strategic and tactical, marriages of convenience and marriages made in heaven.

These classes were the feudal aristocrats; the peasants; the bourgeoisie; and the proletariat.

Engels' work has the additional benefit of introducing the rudiments of political philosophy, and leading our thoughts towards the "democratic bourgeois republic", which is at one and the same time the highest form of political life before socialism, the prerequisite of concerted proletarian action, and a form of the State that has to be achieved, transcended and then left behind.

Those in need of an occasional quick, brief revision of the theory of socialism and communism might like to save these three texts, and read them again from time to time. Naturally, the same applies to all of the work used in this "basics" course.

There is no great need to search for modern summaries of the classics, when the masters have provided very good summaries of their work, themselves.

- **The above is to introduce the original reading-texts: [Socialism, Utopian and Scientific, Engels, 1880](#).**
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Basics, Part 5



SACP Constitution

The jewel of the [SACP Constitution](#) is **Rule 6.5**, which says:

"Members active in fraternal organisations or in any sector of the mass movement have a duty to set an example of loyalty, hard work and zeal in the performance of their duties and shall be bound by the discipline and decisions of such organisations and movement."

"They shall not create or participate in SACP caucuses within such organisations and movements designed to influence either elections or policies."

“The advocacy of SACP policy on any question relating to the internal affairs of any such organisations or movements shall be by open public statements or at joint meetings between representatives of the SACP and such organisations or movements.”

This means that SACP members active in any part of the mass movement, including trade unions, and including the ANC, do so in the utmost good faith.

SACP members serve the mass organisations on the terms of those organisations.

This clause is the backbone of the Alliance of the SACP with the ANC and COSATU, including COSATU’s affiliates.

It is because the mass organisations understand this rule that the alliance has been so solid for so long.

It means that SACP members can be trusted, and are in fact trusted.

The SACP Constitution, as a whole, is a model of how a constitution needs to be written. It is as brief as it can be, as direct as it can be, and where necessary it is sufficiently detailed. It is a very fine document, of which SACP Party members can be justly proud.

Mastering the SACP Constitution

Taking the CU booklet version, which is 20 pages long, and reading backwards, the last three pages are on disciplinary procedure.

Pages from 7 to page 17, (clauses 8 to 23), roughly eleven in total, and therefore more than half of the entire constitution, are taken up with the structures of the Party from the National Congress down to Branches and Units. All of these are straightforward and easy to understand.

Clauses 1 and 2 have to do with the name, symbol and flag. Clause 7 establishes the Young Communist League, in very few words.

The remainder of the clauses, 3, 4, 5 and 6 are where you will find the distinguishing features of the Party, mainly on pages 1 to six of the CU version.

These are the ones you should read first.

- **The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [SACP Constitution, 2012](#).**



Call to the CoP; Freedom Charter

In our “Basics” course, the attached document is given as an alternative or supplementary discussion document to the main one on the SACP constitution, so that we could, if we wanted, have a discussion around mass and vanguard organisation, alliances between classes, and the role of the Party.

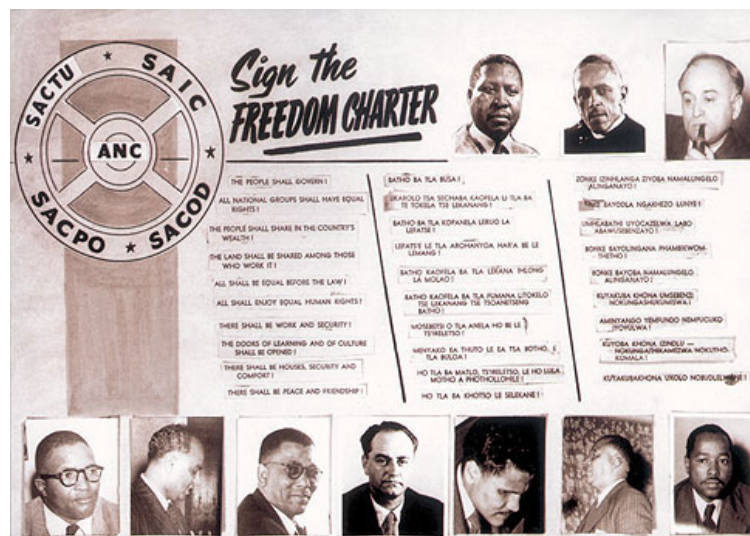
The SACP’s Rule 6.5 makes a good basis for alliances. The attitude and principle that Rule 6.5 represents has been successful over the decades. Alliance of mass democratic organisations was exemplified the 1955 Congress of the People and the Freedom Charter that was adopted there.

The Freedom Charter was much more than a list of demands. It was an integral part of a conscious nation-building project which had real revolutionary content and which demonstrated real democracy in action, following the banning of the communist party (CPSA) in 1950.



The campaign of which the Freedom Charter was a part, and which generated the Charter, began long before the Kliptown event. It was also intended to go on for a long time afterwards. It got under way with the collection, by countrywide volunteers, of suggestions and inputs to the document, so that the people could “write their own demands into the Charter of Freedom”, as the “Call” document said.

In practice, the campaign was disturbed, following the Kliptown event, by the arrest of many of the Congress and allied leadership, in 1956, and the subsequent Treason Trial. But this did not stop the Freedom Charter from attaining the classic status that it still carries today.



Those old comrades laid down a well-designed pattern. It appealed to the heart as well as to the eye and to the mind, and it still surrounds us today, manifested in the continuing Congress Alliance of which the SACP, legal again, is now an open part.

As it was when Lenin spoke in the Second Congress of the Communist International in 1920, so it was again in 1955. Two things were required. The first was a genuine class alliance and unity-in-action against the main oppressor class, the colonialist monopoly capitalists. The other was the deliberate extension of democracy for the creation of a democratic nation.

The CoP campaign was exactly in this mould.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Call to the Congress of the People and the Freedom Charter](#).



O R Tambo



Joe Slovo



Dr Yusuf Dadoo

Strategy and Tactics

“The art of revolutionary leadership consists in providing leadership to the masses and not just to its most advanced elements...”

The above line from the ANC’s Morogoro Strategy and Tactics of 1969 (attached) can be taken as the idea of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) in a nutshell. Politics is in the subjective realm – it is about the ultimate subjectivity, freedom – but politics can exist within the limits of objective realities. The NDR has a steadily-built organisational history of personalities, events and documents, working within, while at the same time changing by its action, the balance of class forces in South Africa.

Next to the Freedom Charter, the ANC Strategy and Tactics document of 1969 is the most prominent of all the NDR documents. In discussing the military activities of Umkhonto we Siswe (MK), it outlines alliance politics in terms that are sometimes crystal-clear, and sometimes not so clear. For an example of the latter, the enemy is not well described. Still, the Morogoro S an T is the best one to use as the basis for a discussion of the subjective political action of this period, and for some remarks on the underlying class realities, as well.

The Treason Trial had come to an end in 1959 with acquittal of all the defendants. New campaigns were then launched, but came to an abrupt end following the Sharpeville massacre and the banning of the ANC and the PAC. Umkhonto we Sizwe was launched in 1961. Technically it was neither a “wing” of the ANC, nor of the Party, and a new structure had to be put into place to make MK accountable to the political leadership. Dr Yusuf Dadoo played a leading role in that structure.

- The above is to introduce the original reading-text: [Strategy and Tactics, Morogoro, 1969, ANC](#).